



Imagining America
Artists and Scholars in Public Life

PRESS RELEASE

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National Tenure Team Initiative for Arts and Humanities Announced

Higher Ed Leaders Seek Better Ways to Value Public Scholarship and Public Art

Ann Arbor, MI (September 30, 2005) —Imagining America, a national consortium of colleges and universities, has announced the formation of the Tenure Team Initiative (TTI). The Initiative brings together a group of higher education leaders to examine critical aspects of promotion and tenure policy in the arts, humanities, and design.

Led by National Co-chairs, Nancy Cantor (Chancellor and President of Syracuse University) and Steven D. Lavine (President of the California Institute of the Arts), the Tenure Team seeks to create a usable resource for deans and chairs that will help them to assess and reward public scholarship and creative work by faculty in the arts and humanities. The TTI prospectus notes that the effort arises from recent developments within the cultural disciplines themselves. These changes, it argues, are led by significant numbers of faculty who believe that public scholarship and creative work taps the most inventive potential of the arts and humanities.

“We absolutely have to pay attention to the fact that a diverse professoriate and a diverse student body want to be engaged with the broader issues of our communities and publics, locally or around the world,” says Cantor. “New policies should examine but also strengthen contributions to democratic citizenship in rapidly changing, multi-ethnic settings.” Lavine agrees: “The voice of the artist in the university almost always requires work outside the university. We must win the battle to get that work to count.”

Dr. Julie Ellison, Director of Imagining America and Professor of American Culture, English, and Art and Design at the University of Michigan and Dr. Timothy Eatman, Imagining America’s Project Director for Research and Policy, will direct the effort.

On Friday September 30, Cantor will announce the confirmed members of the Tenure Team:

Thomas Bender, Professor of History, New York University

Ellen McCulloch-Lovell, President, Marlboro College

Craig Calhoun, President, Social Science Research Council

Judith Ramaley, President, Winona State University

Eugene Rice, Scholar in Residence, Director of the Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards, AACU

Mary Schmidt Campbell, Dean of the Tisch School of the Performing Arts and Associate Provost, New York University

Carol Christ, President, Smith College

Gail Dubrow, Dean of the Graduate School, University of Minnesota

Ira Harkavy, Founding Director and Associate Vice President, Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania

Nicholas Lemann, Dean of Journalism, Columbia University

Earl Lewis, Provost, Emory University

Devora Lieberman, Provost, Wagner University

George Sanchez, Professor and Director of Ethnic and American Studies, University of Southern California

Carol Schneider, President, Association of American Colleges and Universities

David Scobey, Director and Professor of the Harvard Center for Community Partnerships, Bates College

Orlando Taylor, Dean of the Graduate School, Howard University

James Undercofler, Dean, Eastman School of Music, Rochester University

Christopher Waterman, Dean, Arts and Architecture, UCLA

Robert Weisbuch, President, Drew University

The individuals on the Tenure Team, Ellison says, are exceptional in their cross-sector experience. “These people are deeply grounded in the work of humanistic knowledge and artistic creation. Most strikingly, their careers are marked by movement between—and intellectual translations between—professions, academic fields, university administration, foundation leadership, senior roles in cultural institutions, federal government positions, experience with policy centers on and off campus. Individually and together, they bring the imagination, flexibility, and range that an undertaking like this needs.”

A group of Consulting Scholars and Artists will ground the work of the Tenure Team in specific fields and practices, and in the analysis of changes in higher education.

***Jan Cohen Cruz**
Professor of Theater, Tisch School of the Performing Arts
New York University

Diane Douglas
Executive Director, Center for Liberal Arts
Bellevue Community College

***Hiram Fitzgerald**
Assistant Provost for University Outreach and Engagement
Michigan State University

***Gladstone (Fluney) Hutchinson**
Dean of Studies
Lafayette College

***Julia Reinhard-Lupton**
Director, Humanities Out There
UC-Irvine

***Clement Price**
Director, Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience
Rutgers-Newark

Sarah Robbins
Professor of English and Education, Director of Kennesaw Mountain Writing Project, Director of Keeping and Creating American Communities Project
Kennesaw State University

***Lawrence Rothfield**
Director, Center for Cultural Policy
University of Chicago

John Saltmarsh
Director
NERCHE

***David Thelen**
Professor of History
Indiana University

***Nancy Uscher**
Provost
California Institute for the Arts

***Kathleen Woodward**
Director, Simpson Center for the Humanities,
University of Washington

(* indicates IA member institution)

The primary product of the TTI will be a report that presents: 1) an analysis of the key concepts and premises inherent in public scholarship and arts production; 2) a clear definition of the diverse forms of public scholarship in the cultural disciplines; and 3) recommended tenure and promotion policies suitable to publicly-engaged humanities scholarship and artistic creation.

Ellison observes, “The flourishing ecosystem of university-community cultural work is putting pressure on our institutions to respond pragmatically and flexibly. Now it is time to stimulate fresh thinking about faculty evaluation.” She adds: “We can build upon existing practices. For example, architecture provides a portfolio model for presenting and reviewing complex collaborative projects.”

Imagining America is committed to public scholarship in the arts, humanities, and design. The Tenure Team Initiative advances the priorities established by Imagining America since its inception at a White House conference in 1999.

Cantor will announce the launching of the Tenure Team Initiative on Friday September 30 as a featured event of Imagining America’s national conference, ***Public Engagement and Intercultural Practice: New Democratic Spaces for Scholars and Artists***. The conference is co-sponsored by the Newark and New Brunswick campuses of Rutgers: The State University of New Jersey. Cantor’s talk will be followed by a working session led by Dr. Eatman, open to all conference attendees, where participants will be urged to grapple directly with a set of existing and emerging tenure policies.

The conference is IA’s fifth national convening. The conference keynoter is Dr. John Kuo Wei Tchen, Director of Asian/Pacific/American Studies at NYU and co-founder of the Museum of Chinese in the Americas.. He will speak on “**Collaborations Across Borders: What Stories Are We Telling?**” Conference sessions focus on many dimensions of campus-community partnerships. Additional conference information, including program of events, is available at: <http://www.ia.umich.edu/05.ia-nc.html>.

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